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# THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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VOL. 134  
No. 20

Frank Page  
is nominee  
for EC post

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Frank Page, vice president of evangelization for the North American Mission Board, will be nominated as the next president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

A vote on Page's nomination will be held June 14. If elected, he will succeed Morris Chapman, who will retire Sept. 30 after 18 years in the post. Chapman is a native of Kosciusko.

Clarence Cooper, pastor of Brandon Church, Brandon, served as a member of the trustee search committee that nominated Page.

## Churches starting long storm recovery

By Tony Martin  
Associate Editor

Mississippi faces a long recovery in the aftermath of two storm systems that assaulted the state in April and May. The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task force responded to both incidents.

In the Yazoo City tornado disaster, the Task Force responded during April 25-May 2. Approximately 12,000 meals were prepared, with 64 chainsaw jobs completed including the placing of blue tarps on damaged roofs. Shower units provided 98 showers, and 13 loads of laundry were completed. There were 102 volunteers involved in the effort.

In Walnut on May 2-9, 10,800 meals were prepared, 41 chainsaw jobs completed (including blue roofs), with 66 showers and 19 loads of laundry completed. Volunteers in this effort numbered 73.

In other less-heralded parts of the state, damage was no less significant. The April 24 tornado, which cut a broad swath through the state, passed through Weir and came close to Mt. Moriah Church.

John Garner has pastored Mt. Moriah Church three years. "Saturday [April 24], at 1:34 p.m., I was in the parsonage adjacent to the church," he said. "I'd been watching the Columbus TV station, and it looked like the worst of the storm was passing north of us, but then the tornado hit."

"Immediately afterwards I ran down the road to check on my deacons. Two of my deacons' homes were completely gone. There was a young couple — one deacon's daughter — and their home was gone. Another deacon had severe damage. At our own house, we only lost



"THE LORD IS STILL SOVEREIGN" — Ebenezer Church, near Lexington, was destroyed in the April 24 tornado. Deacon chairman Wilburn White (left) and pastor Billy Barron survey the damage. (Photo by Tony Martin)

four shingles. About 150 yards away the tornado totally destroyed five homes, and it left us untouched."

Garner was overwhelmed at the response to the disaster. "The telephone rang Sunday morning at 7:30," he said. "A constable from Houston said there was a group coming from First Baptist Houston to prepare hot meals. They were here on site by 11 a.m. and by 12:30 had a complete hot meal ready. From Sunday morning until Tuesday, we fed 1500-1800 hot meals. We were thankful they were so organized and were able to respond. They knew what to do. From that, churches from all over have just taken this community over. Through food, monetary gifts, diapers, water, baby food, prayer — we've just been covered in prayer! — all denominations have helped."

"Through all the gifts we've been given, we've been able to help 50 families," Garner said. "I'm glad to be a Baptist. I used to think it was prideful to say that, but there's more to it than that. It's more than pride; it's being all you can be. For instance, there is a church close by with 25 members, and they brought us a \$2,500 check. We are so moved by the love of Christians from all over."

About 60 miles from Weir is the community of Ebenezer, near Lexington. Ebenezer Church was destroyed in the same storm.

Billy Barron, Ebenezer Church pastor, said, "I was in Meridian doing a funeral when my daughter called and said she had seen on TV that Ebenezer had been destroyed, the whole town. We tried to call people, and there was no land line service, no cell service. It took us two hours to get in touch with anyone. We found out the church was gone. We only lost two shingles on our house. We survived, but several folks had a lot of damage."

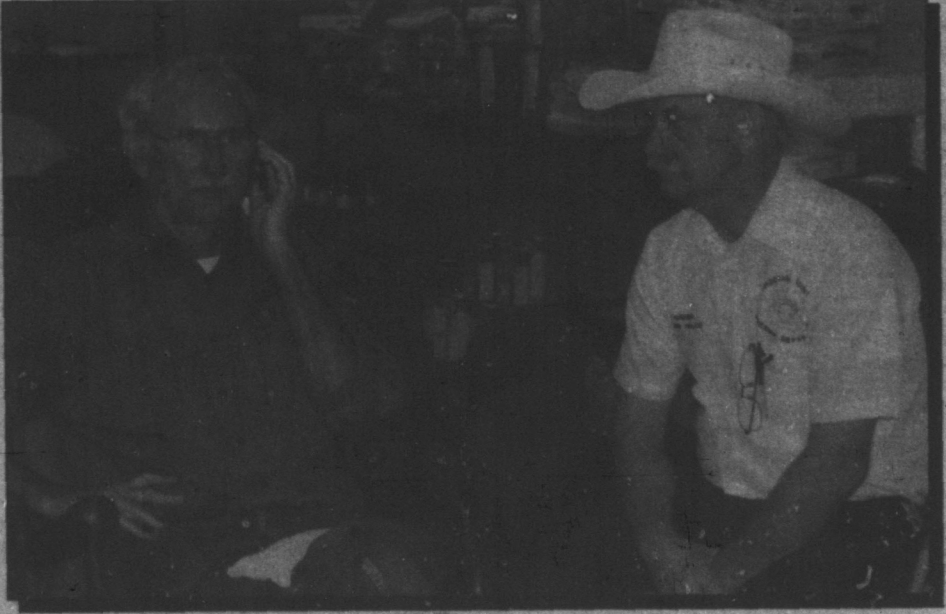
"We built a fellowship hall on the building back in 1994, but the sanctuary is gone." The church itself was established in 1879. The sanctuary was built in 1890. "All the lumber for the church came out of Mobile," Barron said, "and came to Pickens by train. It took 21 wagons to bring the lumber from Pickens here. Some of the trusses of the building had some beautiful artistic work on them. History says that a man and his 12-year-old son cut all of them out."

Some of the ornate work could still be found in the ruins of the building.

"I came to supply preach in 1983," said Barron, "and I said I'd be here until they called a pastor. So I've been true to my word — I'm still here!" When Barron came to the church, it had gone through a split and there were only seven or eight members. "We could barely keep the bills paid," he said.

"I'm hoping we can get through this," he continued. "We have to make some short term and long term plans. The Methodist church just up the road has offered us their facility. They have a large fellowship hall, and we'll be meeting in there — but the Lord is still sovereign, isn't he?"

Wilburn White, the church's chairman of deacons, agreed. "Our will and desire is to build back, and we'll try to make that happen."



TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS — John Garner (left), pastor of Mt. Moriah Church, Weir, and Choctaw County Sheriff Cloyd Halford are shown in the church's family life center days after the tornado ripped through the community on April 24. The church was inundated with aid from all over the country. (Photo by Tony Martin)

# Floyd: CP in 'more danger' than realized?

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — Southern Baptists who worry the Cooperative Program will be undermined if the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force recommendations are adopted should ask whether the Cooperative Program isn't already in more danger than they realize, the chairman of that task force said on May 12.

Whether promoting undesigned contributions under a new Great Commission Giving banner would harm Cooperative Program giving is "a very legitimate question," said Ronnie Floyd during an online panel discussion hosted by CAA Ministries at outreachandevangelism.org, "but if they think the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force report is a threat to the Cooperative Program, then the Cooperative Program is in more danger than any of us realize."

Task force member Robert White, who is executive director of the Georgia Baptist Convention, said the GCRTF report — which will be considered by messengers to the June 15-16 SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla. — is intended to state "very succinctly and with pristine clarity that the task force 100% believes in and supports the Cooperative Program."

"Some have feared that with the word 'celebrate' we would elevate designation and diminish the Cooperative Program," White said. "I can tell you, by personal testimony and by sitting in the room, this has not been the intent of the task force. It has not been in the heart of anybody in the room that I have been able to detect whatsoever."

"I think there is a unified desire to see the Cooperative Program grow and continue to bless this ministry in the years ahead, but also to express appreciation to churches for what they will do to bless Kingdom ministries through the Southern Baptist Convention."

White said he was surprised and distressed to learn that local church gifts to non-Southern Baptist causes were included in the Annual Church Profile report submitted to the SBC each year.

"It's been years since I've even been in the process of filling out an ACP. I honestly did not realize — I'm confessing here openly — I didn't know until recently that a church could account as 'other' missions gifts, in that designated column, things they gave to missions organizations that were not even Southern Baptist," White said, "so we have actually narrowed the field considerably in designations that these designations go only for SBC, state convention, or

associational mission causes. We have really homed in on the work and ministry of Southern Baptists."

White also said he strongly supports the task force's proposal to turn more North American missions money away from states with established state conventions toward areas where Southern Baptist work is newer and not as strong.

The executive directors of the Southern Baptist state conventions "are some of the finest men I have ever known in my life, totally committed to the Kingdom of God and penetrating the darkness in our own nation," White said. "The fact of the matter is, we can do a much better job than we have done, primarily in the Northeast, the upper Midwest, and out West."

"We have state conventions — some that have been in existence for 50 to 100 years — that are heavily dependent on support from the North American Mission Board because of the need to plant more and more churches," White added. "They acknowledge this need. They are doing a great job in their state conventions, but us older and larger state conventions would like to see a greater concentration of funds going to these new work states."

"States like Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and others are saying, 'We see the need to penetrate the darkness in these darkest areas of our country,'" White said. "We're willing to return to the North American Mission Board a total of between \$11 and \$14 million, to see those dollars sent to our new work areas for the purposes of evangelism and church planting."

The task force recommendation would end NAMB's cooperative agreements with all 41 state and regional conventions and with Canada totaling \$51 million direct support and about \$62 million overall. About \$48 million of the overall amount would be taken from 36 pioneer states and Canada, some with large populations and top 10 global urban centers, and reprioritized by NAMB.

Task force members also responded to a question about churches that may think the task force report offers too little change at too slow a pace.

"This is a very, very large ministry and we can't throw everything away because

everything is not a problem. In fact, most of what we do is not a problem," Floyd said. "I have said this again and again. This is not about good versus evil choices. This is about what's good and what's best. That's why it's so tough for all of us to get our arms around it at times and to go together in those tough areas."

In an organization the size of the Southern Baptist Convention, dramatic change cannot happen overnight, added task force member Daniel Akin, president of Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., and one of the principal authors of the task force report.

"We realize there are changes that probably need to be made in all areas of Southern Baptist life and those changes cannot be made overnight," Akin said. "We are not turning a speedboat here. We are trying to turn an aircraft carrier. It has to be done step by step at a time or we run the risk of toppling the ship and doing greater damage."

The task force members "all recognize the need to make changes but we need to do so in a responsible way that honors our past but also sets a course for the future," Akin said. "To do that doesn't happen in a day. It will happen, I believe, over many years as we incrementally move forward in the right direction."

The panel also was asked

whether, to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, task force members had removed themselves as candidates for open leadership positions at the North American Mission Board, International Mission Board and SBC Executive Committee.

"That's an interesting question," said Floyd, laughing. "I'll be very honest with you. This task force has been so busy with the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force and our responsibilities, we have been so focused that that's where our focus has been."

"We're praying every day for those entities that are searching for leaders because we know that, while plans can be given to those entities, we've got to pray that God will lead the right men there. That's what we're doing. Our task force is very deliberate over that. That is definitely what we want to see happen."

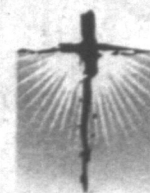
Task force member Ted Traylor, pastor of Olive Church in Pensacola, Fla., chairman of the presidential search team at NAMB, and candidate for SBC president, said their group had not declined to consider anyone because of membership on the GCR task force.

"I don't believe this ever came up in any of our meetings, as far as ruling out or taking someone off of any list,"

Traylor said. "I would say, from our perspective, we are looking for God's man. If he's in this task force or out of it, that's what we're looking for. I think the short answer to that is I don't believe we have set anybody aside because they served on the GCR."

"It may be that because they served on the GCR they wouldn't touch it with a hundred-foot pole, but we've not set them aside."

Also participating in the panel discussion were task force members Johnny Hunt, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of the Atlanta-area First Church of Woodstock, and Harry Lewis, a senior strategist at the North American Mission Board.



MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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No. 18



YOU CAN RESPOND  
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

Midwestern Seminary, Kansas City, barely escapes damage from a tornado that touches down just 10 blocks south of the campus.

### 20 years ago

The Faculty Club of Southern Seminary calls for the resignation of seminary trustee Jerry Johnson of Colorado. Johnson wrote a paper, published by the Southern Baptist Advocate, charging seminary president Roy Honeycutt and other seminary faculty leaders with heresy.

### 50 years ago

Twenty-six missionaries appointed and two reappointed by the Foreign Mission Board at its May meeting bring the total number of Southern Baptist missionaries to 1,434, the largest group of missionaries to be appointed by the Board at a regular monthly meeting.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# Toward broader representation

The latest information from the Annual Church Profile forms submitted by churches affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention indicate that we are 16.6 million members strong. From sea to shining sea, and across every shining sea on the face of the globe, Southern Baptists are represented among the populace. That's a lot of diversity!

That's also why the makeup of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force is so disappointing. Charged with nothing less than the positioning of the Southern Baptist Convention for ministry in the 21st century, the task force's composition leaves a lot to be desired in terms of representation.

Mississippi Baptists, Alabama Baptists, and Louisiana Baptists (among others) were left off the task force, appointed by Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt at the direction of messengers to last year's annual meeting in Louisville, Ky.

However, Hunt appointed five Florida Baptists to the task force, along with three each from North Carolina Baptists and Georgia Baptists. Tennessee Baptists count

two members of the task force.

Considering the task force has only 22 members, that's a lot of heavy representation from some areas and no representation for other equally important groups. Just one state, Florida, comprises nearly 23 % of the task force.

Contacted by The Baptist Record regarding the disparity in representation, Hunt issued the following statement:

*There are lots of states that do not have people on the task force since the number of members is only 22 and we of course have 50 states. I was not necessarily looking at states that gave a lot of money to the CP as much as looking at capable, godly leaders that have a real passion and a heart for the Great Commission. I was also thinking more along the lines*



IN SESSION — Ronnie Floyd (at podium), pastor of First Church in Springdale, Ark., leads a January meeting of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force in San Antonio, Texas. (BP photo courtesy of The Christian Index)

of ethnicity, age, size of churches, state convention representatives, college representatives, people who have served on the International Mission Board, and someone who has served on staff of the North American Mission Board in trying to have more diversity across denominational lines and not necessarily particular states.

We have people from the Northeast, people from the West Coast, and we have good representation from the people of the South — just a great variety from across the country. As to why we have such representation from states like Florida, it just happens to be these are the ones that we felt would best represent Southern Baptists.

What was the process that allowed a state like Mississippi and the many

churches that support it to be overlooked? I would not use the word "overlooked" as you did — I don't think that is a proper representation of my passion and my heart in leading Southern Baptists. We simply chose the people we felt would be best, and we did not base it on Cooperative Program percentages since there is nothing within Southern Baptist life that demands or coerces an individual to give a certain percentage. The way that I am attempting to lead Southern Baptists is that all of us should do more, even as we are challenging all of our churches to take a look at their missions giving. Please understand also that I believe that the greatest measurement in the context of the life of a Christian is first and foremost their commitment to the lordship of Jesus Christ and a passion for the Great Commission...

Fair enough. Johnny Hunt is the popularly-elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and people always like to snipe at leaders. The fact is that Hunt made his task force selections after much prayer. There was no way he was going to please everyone. Give him credit for accepting a hard job, head-on.

In terms of the credibility of the task force, however, broader representation of all Southern Baptists would have been a commendable step. Given the future of our Kingdom work, we would all do well to remember that — beginning at the SBC level and going all the way up to the local church.

## GUEST OPINION:



### Sunday School classes: a 'moving' experience!

By David Francis  
Nashville

You can give them a copy of the Bible study material your class or group is using along with a testimony about how it is helping you. That should certainly be a standard practice when God opens up the opportunity for an invitation. "I would like to invite you to be a part of our Bible study class. Here is the material we are studying right now..."

Just that simple act may provide the confidence a new person needs to make them more comfortable visiting the class. Your goal for prospects is to move them to attendance as a guest.

• **Moving guests to enrollment.** Guests, or as some still call them, visitors, are checking out your class. You can make them feel more welcome in many ways. (For ideas, check out The 3D Sunday School, which is

available for download at LifeWay.com/SundaySchool).

At the very least, you will want to provide every guest a copy of the Bible study material your class is using. Your goal for guests is to move them to enrollment as a member of the class.

• **Moving members to maturity.** Once someone enrolls in your class, they are not just added to the ministry roll. They become your discipleship responsibility. You want to help them encounter the truths of God's Word in a comprehensive and systematic way appropriate to their stage in life. Your goal for members is to move them to active attendance and spiritual growth.

• **Moving active members to ministry.** The next goal is to move members to ministry. A great first step is to enlist and train them as Care (or

Connect) Group Leaders. The job: Make a weekly contact with five to seven members assigned to their group. An advanced step would be to become an apprentice to the teacher, outreach leader, or inreach leader. For more on the apprentice concept, see the bonus chapter of The 3D Sunday School book.

• **Moving ministers to missionaries.** In an adult class, the ultimate goal is to send members out of the class to serve in preschool, children or student departments, and classes or to start another adult class. The other group of missionaries is those who birth a new adult class. I call this process, "The Two Marks of an Adult 3D Class," and you can read more about the two marks, release and "reproduce," in the bonus chapter of The 3D Sunday School.

Attendance. Enrollment. Maturity. Ministry. Missionary. You can probably come up with a better plan. The important thing is to have a process, be able to communicate it clearly and have an intention to move people through it.

Francis is director of Sunday School at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 20, 2010

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

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July 15-17, 2010



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- to set prisoners free
- to share God's Word

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- Comparative religions
- Reading comprehension
- MissionShift
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For detailed schedule and form please call Lisa Miller or Paula Smith at 800-746-1651 or [lmiller@mbcb.org](mailto:lmiller@mbcb.org) / [psmith@mbcb.org](mailto:psmith@mbcb.org)

## 2010 SENIOR ADULT REGIONAL RALLIES

Cost \$1 at the door

### NORTHERN RALLY

Tuesday, August 24

FBC, Oxford

(662-234-3515)

**PREACHER: SONNY ADKINS**

Mendenhall, former Director of Evangelism, MBCB

**CHOIR: LAMPLIGHTERS**, Clarksdale BC

#### CONFERENCES:

- "Fun Time w/Daryl Logan"  
Ventriloquist from Bruce
- "Praying Without Ceasing"  
Michael Weeks

Pastor at Pleasant Hill BC, Olive Branch

• "Motivating Seniors"

David Smith, Minister of Recreation/Seniors  
Harrisburg BC, Tupelo

### SOUTHERN RALLY

Tuesday, August 26

Family Association Center, Collins

(601-765-4689)

**SPEAKER: JIMMY PORTER**

Executive Director-Treasurer

Christian Action Commission, MBCB

**CHOIR: SINGING SAINTS**, Meridian

#### CONFERENCES:

- "Fun Time w/Tony"  
Tony Martin (magic/humor)  
Associate Editor, Baptist Record, MBCB
- "Praying Without Ceasing"  
Talmadge Smith, Retired AMD Brookhaven
- "Motivating Seniors"

Ken Hopkins, Minister of Senior Adults  
Temple BC, Hattiesburg

### SCHEDULE FOR RALLIES

8:30 a.m.	Registration/Refreshments
9:00	Rally
10:00	Break
10:30	Conferences
11:30	Adjourn

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RNJVCs QV BSORR DNC  
JORP UD XOAPDVBB,  
GHC BSORR SOIV CSV  
RULSC NW RUWV.  
ZNSD VULSC: CJVRIV

Clue: H = U

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Eight: Forty

## WELCOME TO OUR CHURCH

I was away from home and spent the night at a motel right near where I was going to be preaching on Sunday morning. Early Sunday morning I went out and took a brief walk before heading off to the church. I passed by a building that was being used for a new church start. Since it was not normally a church facility, a group of people was there setting up. There were eight or ten cars at the facility and probably twice that many people there setting up for the service. The best I could tell they were arranging chairs, tables, and sound equipment. They had already moved the portable sign out front showing the name of the new church welcoming everybody to come.

As I saw what was taking place, I thought maybe I would have time to go to that service and then go on to the church where I was going to speak. As I walked up to the building to find one of the workers to ask the time of the services, there were a couple of people out in the parking lot area. When they saw me coming, they disappeared. I went inside this large building thinking that I could find someone there, but to my surprise, the closest I got to anybody was about 50 yards.

I honestly could not believe nor do I think they actually evaporated, but they disappeared. As I would start walking toward someone, they would turn and duck in a door that went somewhere

and though I believe that every one of them saw me, not one of them spoke to me. They sure did not let me get close enough to find out who they were or when the service would begin.

I did not go to church there that Sunday. I was not mad or boycotting it, I just could not find a way to find out what time I needed to be there. I wondered how welcome I would be if I actually went. Although this was a new church start, I thought how many churches there are that week after week are as uninviting as that one was. Out of that experience, I put together some guidelines about welcoming people to church.

One - it takes more than a sign that says, "Welcome" or "Visitors Welcome." It's fine to have that on the sign, but I doubt anyone ever sees a welcome sign and thinks, "Oh good, here is a church that will welcome me." I walked

by that church, and the closest I got to the pulpit was 100 yards. It was probably several hours before the services were to start, but already I felt that these folks were not happy to see me.

Two - welcoming new people, friends, guests, and unbelievers is vitally important. The Bible says that we should be people of hospitality and the pastor should be a person gifted with hospitality. While we spend more time preparing a message that we will speak and on music that will be presented than virtually anything else, more often than not people will not remember what we spoke or what we sang by Monday. What they will remember is the attitude and the atmosphere that made them feel at ease and welcomed in the building.

Three - welcoming people to our fellowship is not just the responsibility of the preacher, the parking lot

attendants, the greeters, or the person at a visitor's table. No, the responsibility does not belong to just one of those but, in fact, to all of those and everyone. When they go away, they may have had a good experience and felt welcomed by everyone but one person - and guess who they will remember in the days ahead. They will remember the one from which they received the awkward feeling.

Four - The Scripture says, "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly" (Prov. 18:24a). If a church is going to have friends, it must show itself friendly. For some this may sound rather mundane, even worldly, and possibly non-spiritual. You may want to excuse yourself and act as though you are not a part of the issue because you have not welcomed people or greeted people in an unkind and un-Christian way. I'm sorry, but we are all a part of the issue. We all should step up, warm up, and welcome folks if they even look in the direction of our church facilities. It makes a difference!

This Sunday you can be that difference.

The author can be contacted at [jfutral@mbcb.org](mailto:jfutral@mbcb.org).

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# ACP shows baptism increase, decline in membership

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptists reported a 2.2% increase in baptisms in 2009, stemming a four-year decline, but membership in the denomination fell and the sagging economy led to a drop in missions giving, according to the Annual Church Profile (ACP) compiled by LifeWay Christian Resources in conjunction with Baptist state conventions.

Baptisms last year totaled 349,737, up from 342,198 in 2008, a year in which Southern Baptists recorded the fewest baptisms since 1987. Total membership fell 0.42% to 16.16 million, and Sunday School enrollment dropped .04% to 7.75 million.

While the baptism numbers are encouraging, they do not necessarily signal a reversal of fortune for the nation's largest Protestant denomination, said Thom Rainer, LifeWay's president and CEO.

"Every baptism is a celebration of another person finding new life in Jesus Christ," Rainer said. "The fact that more people were baptized this year than last year gives us a reason to hope we're on the right path. At the same time, we as Southern Baptists continue to show signs of drifting from our historic commitment to evangelism, as reflected in the fact that it still takes 46 Southern Baptists to lead one person to faith in Christ."

Baptism symbolizes believers' identification with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection; their new life in Christ; and their anticipation of the day in which Christ will raise them from the dead, demonstrating His victory over sin and death. Therefore, the number of baptisms is a key measurement of Southern Baptists' effectiveness in evangelism.

Rainer continued, "The decline in membership across

our denomination, along with the drop in Sunday School enrollment, indicate that Southern Baptists continue to be distracted from — or indifferent toward — the command of Jesus to make disciples. I pray that these discouraging numbers sound a wake-up call to all of us."

ACP data revealed a rise (.36%) in Southern Baptist churches, to 45,010, and an

increase of .37% in primary worship attendance, to 6.21 million.

Giving to missions totaled \$1.33 billion in 2009, down 1.8%, reflecting economic downturn.

Rainer pointed out that numeric/percent changes for certain categories, listed below, could not be completely figured for the 2009 ACP. Some state conventions did not ask for certain items to be reported, or asked in a

way that gave results that were not comparable to totals reported in the 2008 ACP:

- WMU enrollment: 726,031.
- Men/boys mission education enrollment: 397,541.
- Total tithes, offerings and special gifts: \$10.83 billion.

To view a summary of statistical information for the SBC, go to <http://www.bpnews.net/pdf/2009SBCStatsSummary.pdf>.

## Court convicts, releases Baptist vol



Silsby

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (BP and local reports) — Baptist volunteer Laura Silsby has been released by Haitian authorities after a court conviction on May 17.

According to the Associated Press, Silsby was convicted of arranging to transport 33 children out of Haiti in late January, following the Jan. 12 earthquake that ravaged the Caribbean country.

Silsby was leading a group of 10 Baptist volunteers who were detained by authorities for allegedly failing to obtain the needed documentation to transport the children to an orphanage that was being started in the Dominican Republic.

Silsby, who spent 15 full weeks in prison, was released for the time she had served, AP reported, and was free to leave the country. Eight others in the group were freed without charges in mid-February and the ninth was released without charges in early March.

"We're thrilled. We're thanking the Lord. We're humbled, and at the same time very thankful she's out of there. We're very thankful to the Haitian church because they took care of her as well," Paul Thompson, pastor of Eastside Church in Twin Falls, Idaho, told Baptist Press.

Thompson was among those released in February, and though he hadn't spoken directly to Silsby since then, he received regular updates from Haitian Christians who were able to minister to her during her days in prison.

Child kidnapping charges were dropped against all 10, but Silsby remained in jail facing an ill-defined charge of "irregular travel."

Thompson asked for continued prayer for Silsby upon hearing of her release. "Pray for her adjustment at home. She still obviously has a lot of adjustments to come home to, being in jail for such a long time. Pray for her family, for her children," he said.

Also, Thompson said he was reminded of others apart from the Idaho group who face similar challenges. "I think Southern Baptists should use this moment to be reminded of the unknown numbers of believers around the world who are in jail right now for the cause of the Gospel, and we need to be constantly in prayer for them," he said.

## COLLEGE NEWS

1. David Trisler, Natchez, is the first William Carey University graduate to be accepted into the new WCU College of Osteopathic Medicine.
2. Mississippi College professor Larry Logue is the co-author of a new book that focuses on pensions for thousands of disabled Civil War veterans. The author in recent years of other books on Civil War soldiers, Logue teaches history and political science on the Clinton campus. For his latest publication, Logue collaborated with Syracuse University professor Peter Blanck, who heads a disability research center at the New York school. Their scholarly work was published in April by Cambridge University Press. It is titled *Race, Ethnicity & Disability: Veterans & Benefits in Post-Civil War America*.

## REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. **Calvary Church, Louisville:** Revival, Tuesdays in June: June 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 7 p.m.; Trent Jaudon, Steve Jordan, Mike Smith, Brent Golson, and Bobby McKay, speakers; memorial Sunday, June 13; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Rickey McKay, pastor.
2. **Wheeler Grove Church, Alcorn County:** Homecoming, May 23; services, 10 a.m., followed by lunch; Kara Blackard, speaker and pastor; Men of Music, music.
3. **Ackerman Church, Ackerman:** 125th anniversary and homecoming, May 23; services, 10 a.m., followed by potluck meal; several former pastors and staff members present.
4. **Calvary Church, Carroll County:** Homecoming, May 30; morning services followed by dinner; Terry Corley, speaker; Bud Vance, pastor.
5. **Bolton Church, Bolton:** Revival, May 23 – 26; Sun., 11 a.m.; 7 p.m. nightly; Robert Hanvey, speaker; Tim Hubbard, music; Jackie Banes, pastor.
6. **West Shady Grove Church, Wayne County:** Homecoming, June 6; services, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Mitchell Smith, pastor.
7. **Calvary Church, Pricedale:** Homecoming, June 6; fellowship, 9:30 a.m., followed by services at 10:30 a.m. and lunch; Larry McEwen, speaker; Ron West, pastor.
8. **Concord Church, Franklin:** Homecoming, May 23; services, 11 a.m., followed by dinner on the ground and afternoon service, 1:15 p.m.

## BIBLE DRILLS

1. **Calvary Church, Lincoln County,** recognizes its Bible drillers. Shown are Jaden Clark, Carrie Pyeatt, Karabeth Crosby, and Summer Martin.
2. **Beulah Church, Newton County,** presented trophies to its state Bible drill winners. Shown are Jessi Thaggard, Kayla Ramage, Graham Murphree, and Lacey Harrison.



1. Calvary Church, Lincoln County



2. Beulah Church, Newton County

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*"Then celebrate ... the Lord your God by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings the Lord your God has given you."*

*Deuteronomy 16:10*

Pray for: (1) a team from **FBC, Louisville**, going to Peru for discipleship and evangelism activities, May 22-31; (2) a team from **Hernando BC** going to Las Vegas to work with a church plant praying and distributing scripture, May 23-30.

Pray for a team from **FBC, Florence**, traveling to Thailand to do ministry through English as a second language camp, May 30-June 8; (2) a team from **Calvary BC, Hattiesburg**, traveling to New Mexico to do evangelism among the Navajo Indians, May 30-June 7.

Pray for: (1) a team from **Jackson County Baptist Association** going to Alaska for construction and evangelism, May 25-June 7; (2) a team from **Crossview BC, Brandon**, doing ministry in Kodiak, Alaska, May 25-June 1; (3) Ill Senior Adult Retreat (D&FM).

Pray for: (1) a team from **FBC, Picayune**, traveling to Senegal for evangelism and discipling believers, May 3-June 1; (2) a team from **Longview Heights BC, Olive Branch**, traveling to Budapest, Hungary, for university student ministry, May 31-June 8.

Pray for a team from **Lifepoint BC, Senatobia**, traveling to Zimbabwe to lead out in True Love Waits ministry, evangelism and church planting among a people group there. Pray as they travel and serve, May 25-June 7.

Pray for: (1) a team from **FBC, Runnelstown**, traveling to Honduras to work in medical/dental ministry and evangelism, June 1-8; (2) a team from **Broadmoor BC, Madison**, traveling to Odessa, Ukraine, to participate in church planting efforts, June 1-12.

Pray for: (1) a team from **FBC, Madison**, traveling to Peru for medical ministry, May 26-June 4; (2) a team from **FBC, Richland**, traveling to work among unreached people in SE Asia to prayerwalk, train believers and assist in mapping efforts, May 26-June 5.

Pray for a large team from **FBC, Columbus**, as they travel to Brazil to do construction, children's ministry and medical ministry and evangelism, June 2-13.

Pray for: (1) team from **FBC, New Albany**, traveling to El Salvador to participate in medical ministry and evangelism, May 26-June 6; (2) for a team from **George and Greene Association** traveling for church planting impact ministry, May 28-June 5.

Pray for three Christians being held captive in a country in South Asia by Buddhist members of a rebel group. Pray for their release and that they will hold fast to Jesus and not be convinced to turn back to Buddhism.

Pray for J.R., a missionary serving in "Pearl," a city in East Asia. Pray for her city as it is a dark place that desperately needs the light of the Gospel.

Pray for: (1) a team from **Thompson BC, Smithdale**, as they minister in Matamoros, Mexico, May 22-29; (2) State Singles' Retreat (D&FM).

Pray for: (1) the Tzib family from **Cristo Vive Baptist Mission, Pontotoc**, traveling to Brazil for evangelistic outreach, VBS and a block party, May 28-June 1; (2) an Operation Go team from **Ogden BC, Bentonla**, as they do Gospel saturation in Mexico, May 28-June 5.

Pray for: (1) a team from **FBC, Brookhaven**, as they travel to Ecuador to minister through construction efforts, May 28-June 12; (2) a team from **Tri-County Baptist Association** traveling to Southeast Asia to work among an unreached people group, May 30-June 10.

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## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

### I Pledge You My Faithfulness

Matthew 5:27-30; Proverbs 5:15-21; 6:25-32

By Marion D. Duncan

"Don't look and don't touch" is the essence of the teaching Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount concerning faithfulness in marriage. His audience was familiar with the Old Testament teachings, particularly the Ten Commandments, from which He drew his statement addressing their background for fidelity. "You have heard... but I say to you." This is Jesus' second example of the new standard—that thoughts are just as important as deeds. The first example was that of murder and anger. "It was Jesus' teaching that a man is not judged only by his deeds, but that he is judged even more by the desires which never emerged in deeds." (The Gospel of Matthew, by William Barclay)

The hyperbole (the extravagant exaggeration) which followed Jesus' statement demonstrated how seriously He took the marriage relationship between a husband and a wife. He admonished us that it would be better to pluck out or cut off the part of the body that caused the sin of infidelity than to spend eternity in your whole body apart from the presence of God. No one was expected to literally dismember his/her body, but the extreme example taught the seriousness of not being faithful to one's marriage partner. "Jesus said that we are not to look with lust—i.e., looking, keeping on looking, to observe closely and with desire. There would be no adultery, no fornication, no whoredom, no uncleanness of any kind, without that lustful look." (Matthew, by John Phillips) The



Duncan

Lord was not saying that we should cripple ourselves, but should control ourselves.

One of the blights of advanced technology is pornography. Not only is it available through printed material, but, also, via the Internet which offers new frontiers of unfaithfulness with the pseudo-intimacy of cyber-relationships and greater access to pornography. The recent scandal involving high-paid executives using their office computers on company time to access pornography instead of being faithful to the responsibilities for which they were receiving their enormous salaries is indicative of the moral corruption present in our society.

Images that come into our minds through our eyes are impossible to erase or forget except through the cleansing power of our mighty God. These images are recalled involuntarily at the most unexpected and inconvenient times and places no matter how great our desire to rid

our minds of them. This is one reason why parents should protect their children from viewing inappropriate visual images.

If you, a family member, or a friend has a problem with the temptation to view pornography using your computer, there are some practical steps you can take (or share) to avoid that temptation. You can change the habits that promote the problem. For example, vary the time of day that you are on the Internet, block pornographic sites with filters, and find an accountability partner.

Solomon, in Proverbs, entreated his son to pay attention to his wisdom and benefit from his words of insight. He talked about the wise use of water which was valuable—clean water precious—and advised his son to think about his own life the same way. Marriage is a gift from God and not to be taken lightly or for granted. A husband and wife should give themselves to each other, and to no one else. Solomon instructed concerning the wife of his youth that

he, "Let her charms and tender embrace satisfy you. Let her love alone fill you with delight." (5:19) (The Living Bible) The sexual appetite of the human body is of God, and so is to be protected as a holy gift that is to be reserved for marriage. God gave us this physical marriage relationship so we can be 'ravished' by the love of our mate. It is a beautiful expression of oneness, unity. When taken out of its proper perspective and perverted, it becomes sinful, ugly." (Proverbs: The Secret of Beautiful Living, by James T. Draper, Jr.)

We are wrong to think that our evil deeds are known only to us, "For a man's ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all his paths." (v.21) But, no matter what, our past holds, when we confess our sins to Jesus Christ, "... so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us." (Psalm 103:11-12)

Duncan is a member of First Church, Macon.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Stay away from perverted practices

Leviticus 18:1-5, 20:26; 20:6-8

By Shelby Hazzard

#### Avoid worldly practices — Lev 18:1-5

Chapters 18 through 21 include some of the most explicit and graphic instructions found in Scripture. The graphic nature of the commands are trumped only by the harsh consequences for each sin committed, most of which are to be "cut off" from their people, or the death penalty. God takes sin very, very seriously, far more seriously than we realize. The reason for the severity of the penalties and the explicit nature of the commands is because we represent God in the way we live and we must live according to his character, because how we live reflects what we believe.

Israel had just been delivered from centuries of captivity in Egypt and was now entering

the land of Canaan. These polytheistic pagan nations were littered with immoral behavior and idolatrous worship, ranging from temple prostitution to child sacrifice, and as Israel entered Canaan, she must remember that her character must resemble God's. Ephesians 5:15-16 - *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*

God speaks very clearly to Israel and to us. *We are to keep His decrees and laws, for the man who obeys them will live by them.* In other words, when faith conforms our lives to the commands of God, we experience spiritual abundance and joy, even through our trials and tribulations as we die to the world and live for God through Christ.



Hazzard

#### Avoid immorality — Lev 18:20-26

The defilement God is referring to involves sexual sin of the most grotesque lot as Leviticus outlines in detail certain sexual sins that are so serious they carry the death penalty.

Christ heightened these OT commands in Matthew 5:27-28, *You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

God condemns all types of immorality from child sacrifice to homosexuality and every other type of detestable, unspeakable sexual act invented by man. He is sending a very clear message, if we are His, we are not to do these abominable acts; we are to live holy and pure lives before Him and the communities where we live. We are to stand against abortion, euthanasia and any other life devaluing practice. All are considered defilement; all life is pre-

cious because all of mankind is created in the 'image of God.'

Performing these acts, defiled the land, therefore God was about to drive out these Canaanites and replace them with His chosen people.

#### Avoid sorcery — Lev 20:6-8

The people of God were also to avoid consulting any source of knowledge or assistance other than Him. During the life of Israel there were 'diviners' claiming to tell the future, giving advice based on some form of 'supernatural' knowledge. There were several different types: hepatoscopy, the study of the liver of a sacrificial animal; augury, foretelling the future by natural signs such as the flight of birds; necromancy, consulting the dead; casting lots and astrology. Unfortunately, these practices still exist today and are sought many times by professing Christians! The one I see sought the most by them is horoscopes, because many times they are posted on their facebook page for everyone to see!

Galatians 5:19-21 says, *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious:*

*sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. It's very clear and simple; seeking knowledge from any source other than God and His Word is sin and should be avoided.*

There is much to be heeded in these verses. The Christian is to be very cautious in how he or she lives. Many believers mistake the phrase of "freedom in Christ," to mean that we can live any way we want and God will just "forgive us." As Paul said, "By no means!" (Rom 6:2) We have been freed from the power of sin to live as God commands for His glory.

Are you keeping away from perverted practices or have you slowly and subtly allowed Satan to infiltrate your life taking you down the path of immorality and destruction? If so, repent and turn to God.

Hazzard is minister of evangelism, First Church, Greenville.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

THE BAPTIST  
**Record**

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

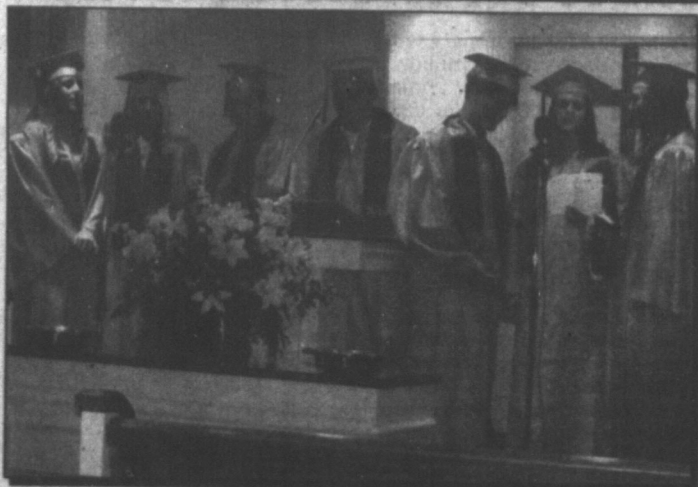
submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

## JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Edna Church, Columbia



2. Branch Church, Morton



3. County Line Church, Dossville



### MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS

1. Edna Church, Columbia, recognizes its high school graduates. Shown are Jordan Cooke, Olivia Ryals, Bradley Baughman, D.B. Mitchell, Javan Porter, Lauren Williamson, and Adriaine Johnson.
2. The Mission Friends of Branch Church, Morton, shared songs with sign language in the Sunday morning service. Shown are Taylor Coward, Brady Phillipson, Tyler Coward, Logan Phillipson, Tray Holeman, Sarah Barthol, and Avery Gordon.
3. County Line Church, Dossville, showed their appreciation to Leake County sheriff Gregg Waggoner, Steve Watkins and the county prisoners for remodeling their church Mar. 28. Shown are Gene Cain, Waggoner, pastor Robert Magee, Watkins, and Scott Cockroft.
4. Chas Rowland, pastor, Duck Hill Church, Duck Hill, recently received his PhD from Mid-America Seminary. Shown are Rowland, his wife Rebekah, and sons Haddon and Charlie.
5. Beulah Church, Newton County, licensed Scott Hall to the gospel ministry May 2. Shown are pastor Keith Ramage and Hall.
6. Parkway Church, Hernando held a dedication service for their new educational building Apr. 18. Shown are the participants.



4. The Rowlands



5. Hall licensing



6. Parkway Church, Hernando

## MISSISSIPPI QUARTET CONVENTION

June 24-26, 2010

Forrest Co. Multipurpose Center-Hattiesburg, MS



Dove Brothers  
Thursday 24th



Triumphant Qt  
Friday 25th



Mike Rowling Family  
Saturday 26th

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1. Antioch Church, House



2. Red Creek Union Church, Perkinston



3. Lee licensing

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## MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS

1. Antioch Church, House, hosted a women's conference Mar. 27. Shown are Iris Blue, Amanda Spence, and Jamie Meadows.
2. The youth group of Red Creek Union Church, Perkinston, participated in a 35-mile cross walk over Easter weekend. Shown are the participants.
3. Ebenezer Church, Jeff Davis Association, licensed Joshua and Daniel Lee to the gospel ministry. Shown are pastor Jackie Cooke, Joshua and Daniel Lee, and their parents Jeffrey and Angela Lee.
4. Neshobz County Association observed Christian Home Week with a senior adult lunch and singles rally May 7, and a family celebration May 8 with County Line Church's puppet team. Guest for the senior adult luncheon were Linda Boulter, with Mercy Moments and Justin Powell. Glenn Jackson, AMD. Shown are Boulter, Jackson, and Powell.
5. Lakeshore Church, Byram, is hosting a women's conference featuring Shelia Walsh June 12, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Tickets, \$20. For more information, call (601) 373-0294.
6. Shiloh Church, Big Creek will host the JAM 2010 Tour, Jesus and Me youth rally June 19, 6 p.m., featuring the Blake Walker Band. Dale Brechin, guest speaker. Refreshments served; a love offering will be received. Bring lawn-chairs. For more info, call (662) 628-5949.

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